

THEOLOGICAL QUARTERLY.

VOL. IX.

APRIL, 1905.

No. 2.

“GRACE AND FREE-WILL.”

An article in the *Lutheran Quarterly* by Prof. Vollert, Ph. D., as an object lesson to our adversaries.

It seems that in recent times this question becomes mooted more and more in every quarter of the Lutheran church. Even the theologians of the General Synod, who usually boast that it never has concerned them, being only a squabble between the Missouri and Ohio synods, have, as time passes on, joined with the Ohioans and Iowaans in the controversy against Missouri, and try to defend that position. At least they want to show that with joyful eyes they look on the war the Ohioans are waging on Lutheran doctrines as confessed by us. They do this mainly by translating articles from German sources, and seem to think that they have established the point when this or that “theologian of the fatherland” also coincides with them. They show, at any rate, that they hold certain doctrines because they are held by others—as all the world is wont to do.

We do not know whether our adversaries are rejoiced to find such able allies or not. Certainly they ought to become suspicious of the correctness of their position in regard to all the questions that have arisen between them and us and the scripturalness of their doctrines, if all the world hastens to the rescue. History teaches that the fight for the Truth of God has ever found few supporters, while its enemies found the whole host of half-Christians and all the

world at their side. We ask them to make an investigation at their back. They might institute a practical test. To their satisfaction they can prove their tenets in regard to the disputed doctrines everywhere — even with free-thinkers. Let them state correctly their position and ours in regard to free-will, election, conversion, and the analogy of faith to anyone of their unbelieving acquaintances and ask him which he prefers as the more reasonable one, and *they* will unhesitatingly be confirmed. It is what the natural man likes. It is his highest ambition to contribute at least a mite to his salvation, if not the whole. Val. Strigel's beggar wanted to pay one farthing rather than accept the nobleman's offer of a free supper at the tavern. Why? Then he could boast that he had supped with a nobleman.

In the article, which we would like to hold before our adversaries as an object lesson and a mirror giving plainly their image, we notice at the outset the absence of religious interest. It considers grace and free-will as some interesting object in the theological curiosity shop, not as a question of life and death to man — the proper attitude of one who does not live by grace alone. It discusses the question as a problem of the human mind, while it is the human mind *versus* faith in the revealed will of God, *i. e.*, the Scriptures. To the author it is the greatest problem of "theological science." Thus it is made devoid of interest to the common Christian. It is also to him only a different attitude of the several divisions of Christendom. That it might be the division line between Christian and antichristian teaching never enters the "theological" mind. That free-will, in the theological sense, is opposed to the grace of God he cannot conceive. Thus we say: The theologian is not in it, if it is true that *Pectus facit theologum* (the heart makes the theologian).

Now we state with the utmost confidence that this applies with the same force to the teaching of our special adversaries as it does to that of their more outspoken backers.

In the inmost heart their theology has not its seat. If they are Christians, the theology of their heart differs far from its statements in words so far as divine revelation from human invention, though in their outward forms, speech, and letters they sometimes somewhat dissemble each other. A quasi-theologian of the General Synod, who was present at the Free Conference at Detroit in the spring of 1904 ascribes religious interest to our adversaries in the following words: “Through the Missourian doctrine of eternal election of particular persons to eternal salvation without regard to their faith (while others are not elected in the same sense) the souls are led into despair, and the consolation of the Gospel is lost. The contention of Missouri that just the reverse is true: that in their doctrine of election, according to which the eternal selection of particular persons is the cause of their salvation, the greatest consolation is offered, because the salvation of the soul is taken out of its own weak hand, but is committed to the power of the almighty hand of God, does not allay the scruples of the Ohioans, because a soul must, ever doubting, ask: Do I really belong to the few elect? Has God really taken my salvation into His almighty hand? This is the religious interest of the anti-Missourians in this controversy about the election of grace.” The following consideration will prove that it is no truly religious (Christian) interest. Doubt, scruples, and despair do not arise from faith in God’s promises, but from disbelief therein. They are not caused by God, but thrown in the heart, even of the faithful, by Satan, and find an ever ready ally in the flesh. Our adversaries will hardly dare to gainsay this. They interest the Christian only in so far as he has to fight against and overcome them. They do not belong to his religion, and he does not lay them to his heart. Assisted by the grace of God in the Word, he holds them as far away as he ever can. His religion is faith in God’s promises of salvation. This gift of God he has at heart. Assured by the Gospel that his sins are banished

forever from the sight of God, man knows for certain from the Word of God that he belongs to his elected, because God has given him faith and taken his particular ("Who-soever," John 3, 16) salvation into His almighty hand. Losing this religious assurance his interest begins to concern itself with his doubts and scruples, falling into despair. This interest is outside the Christian religion, which is interested in divine assurance, faith in Christ and the Gospel. Our adversaries take them up and hold them before their hearers as a bugaboo against Missouri. If they have them at their heart and nurse them, they are outside the pale of Christianity. Their religious interest is gone. Their interest, then, is not to assure the sinner of *his* salvation, but, instigated by their reason, to fight against faith and divine assurance.

We have always maintained, that the position of our adversaries transgresses the division line between those who humbly accept God's revealed truth, without any interference of human reason in God's mysteries, and those who go off in their own conceit, following after strange gods. They are animated by the same spirit of lowering the barricades between the human and divine wisdom by giving the reins to the human factor in conversion and election. They try to smooth the way of the Lord by making the points in the controversy an "anthropological" problem, a different comprehension of certain Scripture passages and Christian truth. This they show when they are willing to enter into compact and spiritual communion with us, if we would only consider our position as a "theological" explanation, a viewpoint (*Richtung*) of thought. They would gladly join us, if we declared it as a problem of theology that can be interpreted according to the two different "tropes" of Lutheran teaching, as Rohnert asserts in his *Dogmatik*. On the contrary, we maintain that, as a problem of anthropology, it cannot be of the theological interest to all Christians and is not worth fighting for. But such it can never be, as it

is a theological principle involving the salvation by grace alone as the Scriptures teach everywhere. Here the spirits part company. Those following our adversaries land at the denial of pure grace. The historical genesis of the rise of orthodoxism, pietism, and rationalism points to the introduction in the Church of the error of making salvation partly dependent on human effort in the shape of foreseen faith as an "explanation" of the divine mystery of election. Though our adversaries ever stoutly deny these allegations, their more pronounced backers show the black hand clearly, as the article in question does.

Our adversaries always stoutly deny that their teaching is the outgrowth of the efforts of the human reason to find a *reconciliation* between God's unmerited grace and human resistance to that grace offered in Christ alone. For this purpose they have invented in conversion the "anthropological problem," *i. e.*, human conduct (*Verhalten*), in election the foreseen faith, and instead of the true analogy of faith, *viz.*: the clear Scriptures, the harmonious structure of the Scriptures. But in trying to throw us off our guard by these levers—for which they have not the *Δὸς ποῦ στῶ*—and subterfuges, they have lost their balance. Still maintaining to conform to the harmony of Scripture, and professing their adherence to the Confessions of the Church, they have to throw off this yoke when coming to the battle and substitute other testimony, *viz.*: that of the "fathers," who introduced their error, and that of their own reason. They have not that of the Law and the Testimony. As we are their true friends, confessing the same confession, and sticking to them without a waver, not wanting to war, but to win them back, we wish them to take a look at their allies who hasten to their rescue.

The evident purpose of the article referred to is to find the reconciliation between grace and free-will. There must be one, though they be ever so much opposed. The writer takes that for granted. He does not so much as question

whether there is one anywhere, whether it is necessary, or whence it is to come. It may not be brought in, as the author asserts, in the way of Martensen in his *Dogmatik* ("Freedom can surrender itself to prevenient grace as the flower opens itself to the rays of the sun") nor in the way of Julius Müller (*Lehre von der Sünde*, p. 207), because that leads to Erasmus' and Strigel's "*facultas se applicandi ad gratiam*." Neither is the way of predestinarianism to be considered. But come in it must. The *Form of Concord*—though, as he shows, it gives not the least clue—must furnish it. If it is not contained therein, it must be "supplemented;" where it cuts away the desired reconciliation, it must be "rejected" or "corrected." It must mean what it does not mean. The "theologian" is bound to explain and reconcile.

In this behavior of their allies our adversaries have a patent enough example of what they do, too, in order to reach their goal. Stop they will not where the Word of God and our Confessions bid us shut our mouth. Neither the Word nor our Confessions give an explanation of His mysteries, because God has revealed none. Neither does reason taken captive by His Word insist on it. Yet they want us to acknowledge that we dare not stop at the brink of the precipice of predestination, but must let down a ladder in the shape of a reconciliation between grace and free-will of man in conversion and an explanation of the election of the saints through foreseen faith, although this ladder never reaches the bottom, the reconciliation not reconciling and the explanation not explaining. They tempt God as Satan did when standing beside Christ on the pinnacle with the wrong words of Scripture, and they want us to join in the effort. But we decline.

The main part of the article is taken up by an examination into the Confessions of the Church, what they teach about grace and free-will, and the historical genesis of them is considered in the teaching of Luther and Melancthon.

In view of the desired reconciliation Luther's teaching in *De Servo Arbitrio* is considered as a misstatement of the question of grace and free-will, which he later had to modify, and which the Confession does no more contain. How this accords with the view which Luther held in regard to this book long after the *Augustana* had been in evidence, is a mystery to us. But the explanatory "theologian" must not be conscious of historical facts when they collide with his "scientific" explanation. But, nevertheless, the statement that "free-will (in regard to divine matters) is a lie" holds good. Luther had accompanied it by showing us God's revealed will in Christ. How could he do otherwise after he had found forgiveness of his sins, which had bound him with iron chains, and from which he could not be released by all exertion of free-will? We find nothing else in the quotation of the author from the *Trostschrift*. Free-will is denied there, as well as in the III. Article of the Small Catechism, and no explanation and reconciliation attempted between grace and free-will. With Melancthon's changes we are less concerned, but as long as he acted as the penman of the Church in the confessional writings he professes the faith of the Church.

In the same way Luther is persistently misrepresented by our adversaries. He must have modified his views of free-will and election, otherwise no explanation is possible, no reconciliation between grace and human free-will can be thought of. They ought to see this from their more outspoken allies.

From the *Augsburg Confession* the author cannot make out a clear case for free-will. He makes indeed some consequences, but they are entirely his own, as he has to confess: "On this subject ('that man is enabled to *cooperate* with grace and to decide for it, because the center of gravity of the nature has been changed by the working of God') the Confession does not contain any more accurate definition, as likewise on the other question, Whether the idea of *civil righteousness* comprehends all that is made possible

to man," etc. The *Apology* of the *Augsburg Confession* limits man's free-will to the resistance of *voluntas malorum*. More he cannot show.

For us, and for all who stand by God's revealed will, no more is needed in the Confession. We are assured of the deep chasm that yawns between the sinner and God's righteousness and justice. We know that it is bridged entirely by the grace of God in Christ and plainly stated in the means of grace, which carry us over to His side in spite of our sin-bound and resisting free-will and deep corruption. We need not, snake-like, wriggle over it on the belly of our understanding the explanation and reconciliation. In Christ these things are plain, and His merit must be, at least partly, overlooked, before the muddle ensues, that needs, of course, an explanation. Though ever so vehemently denied by our adversaries, the fact is plainly shown by their more untrammelled backers.

But does the author educe the desired reconciliation, or only the necessity of it, from the *Form of Concord*? Certainly he has not brought out the fact, if a contradiction exists between it and the earlier confessions on this line. He rather says that the *Form of Concord* in Articles I, II, XI "form(s) a parallel and supplement to the Articles II, XVIII, XIX of the *Augustana*," rejecting both Flacius' Manichaean extreme and Strigel's doctrine of the *modus agendi aliquid boni in rebus divinis*. The fact is brought out that in man not a spark of free-will for good or of spiritual strength is left, and that "conversion results when the Holy Spirit, by means of the Word and the Sacraments, operates upon him," that the deep gulf of original sin, stated in the earlier confession, is not only "copiously repeated," but "even *sharpened* by the definition, that man now, as regards the good, is wholly corrupt and dead. . . . The human will is *thus not causa efficiens*, it suffers, it does not work," though man is not in so far like a block or a stone, that he can receive an impression from the divine Word, but

the unconverted remains *the* "dead block," the "unhewn stone," and is lost of his own fault. But *in conversion* "the *servum arbitrium* is changed into an *arbitrium liberatum*," "then by the power of the Holy Spirit we are able and we ought to cooperate, though much weakness still persists."

After correctly stating the contents of Article XI in regard to election, that man is the sole cause of his damnation, while his salvation entirely rests on God's gracious mercy, and that we are not to seek the assurance of our election in God's secret counsel, but in Christ, revealed in the Word, the author states three points that are thus made: 1. God's will of grace in Christ is general, embracing all. 2. It is serious. 3. It is not irresistible. Reject man can. That is man's conduct in the matter. All the passages quoted reveal no more. Truly the author says in his summary at the end: "The *Form of Concord* identifies the secret will of God with the will of God revealed in Christ. (We hold this to be the correct and satisfactory reconciliation.) Its exclusive purpose is *to secure to grace alone the glory of saving the sinner*. But there is *no reconciliation* of the two attested truths: The *universal will of grace* and *particularistic election of grace*."

By this statement of the scriptural doctrine *WE abide*, as the author himself shows by his quotations from Pastor Brauer of Dargun (Mecklenburg). Who, then, has brought about the lively controversy? Have we, especially Prof. Walther, "*brought out* a conception of the matter which differs essentially from that of the 'Ev. Lutheran theologians' of Germany"?¹⁾ Was it we who began to war against

1) The question is, whether the Missouri Church has brought out a *different conception of the Confessions* as it is given in the preceding, or whether the Lutheran theologians in Germany did so. We earnestly deny it on the strength even of the proof of the author himself. The trouble arose because the German theologians *held* a different conception from that of the symbolical writings of the Church, and our special adversaries followed in their wake. But we did not follow, and by the grace of God the Confessions experienced a true resurrection, and are alive to-day, as God's Word and Luther's doctrine never can be buried.

the Confessions, when we confessed that we accept the sense which the author of necessity educes from its clear statements? Our adversaries prefer that charge against us, but we aver that we wish to stand and to fall by the sense of the Confessions as brought out by their allies, and which they cannot alter except by a juggling with words. They ought to see that the cause of the controversy was and is a radical departure from the Confessions, though they say: "She (the Ohio Synod) will not be enticed or goaded into any position or movement by which the saving truth set forth in the Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church is compromised" (Prof. Loy). To this we invite them back, after they have followed the movement of the Lutheran theologians in Germany in seeking after a reconciliation.

But as "the Word of God should frame articles of faith, otherwise no one, not even an angel" (*Smalc. Art. II, 2, 15*), and "we are not to place the Confessions of the Church on an equality with the Holy Scriptures" (Loy), perhaps our adversaries have found a different doctrine on conversion and election in the Scriptures from that which the Confessions teach. This they deny. But their allies, who are not so much trammelled by a formal adherence to the Confessions, give the whole secret away.

In his eagerness to produce the desired reconciliation, the author says: "But who will say to what extent the heathen even are blown upon and touched by the breath of God's grace? . . . Who will say whether the *capacitas* here is not already sometimes *actus*? Hence the *Form of Concord* is *not to be approved* when in its articles it assumes an equal disinclination of *all* to the Gospel, in so far as this is said to be *equally great*." The proof from Scripture he is yet owing. Not a single passage he produces for this assertion. And those who know their Bible can quote any amount to the contrary. We recall a few: 1 Kings 8, 46. Job 4, 18; 14, 4. Ps. 14, 3; 143, 2. Prov. 20, 9. Matt. 7, 20. Rom. 2, 23; 5, 16. 18. 19. Gal. 3, 22. 1 John 1, 8—10;

5, 19. From the Word of God our adversaries and their allies will never disprove the statement of the *Form of Concord* that there *is* in man an equal disinclination, and equally great.

The strangest part of the whole discussion is found in the point regarding conversion. From the fact that, according to the Confessions, “conversion is not the same as *Infant Baptism*,” but “includes the motions of the new life,” the deduction is made that man, after Baptism, has power to convert himself. According to this, man, born in sin and under death, gets in Baptism not remission of sin and life everlasting, but his power is rehabilitated to convert himself afterwards. He gets in Baptism *synergia*, the *arbitrium liberatum* before conversion and necessary to it. God gives him grace and spiritual life without faith or without converting him: “The person is restored to the first man,” who “occupies no neutral position in regard to God.” A baptized sinner has grace without being converted, because his free-will is required for the latter act.

Need we say that this contains two errors explicitly condemned in the Confessions, and not found anywhere in the Scriptures? We quote Art. II, § 77: “Fourthly, the doctrine of the Synergists which pretend . . . although free-will be too weak to make the beginning and convert himself by its own powers to God and obey the Law of God: but when the Holy Spirit makes the beginning, . . . then free-will by its own natural powers can . . . believe the Gospel,” etc. Against the other: “Item, those who pretend that God in . . . regeneration create a new heart and new man, thus, that the Old Adam’s substance and being be wholly erased,” etc. According to the Bible and the Symbolical Books “regeneration (in the washing of regeneration, *i. e.*, Baptism) and conversion go together hand in hand (Acts 2, 38), Baptism including conversion, though not the same, as conversion, in the language of the Church, is exclusively used of adult persons. If the author really means what his words indi-

cate, that Baptism "includes the motions of the new life," then in Baptism a real conversion is wrought. The "smallest spark and desire of divine grace and eternal salvation" is true faith, or, being converted, as we gather from the *Epitome*, Art. II, §§ 18. 19, and the *Larger Catechism* IV, §§ 74—76.

Toward this conversion, whether brought about in infant or adult, man cannot do and act the smallest particle. It is the action of the Holy Spirit. On this factor alone rests God's command of Baptism, and Infant Baptism becomes not only admissible but valuable as a means of grace. Because the allies of our adversaries, especially in the General Synod, admit a human factor in conversion, they are ever debating¹⁾ among themselves, whether a child has faith or not. They cannot say: If I baptize a child, I have saved a soul. In the same way the other means of grace are falsified in consequence of battling against the doctrines of election and conversion as confessed by our Church in the Symbolical Books. By this signal denial of the Symbolical Books in quest of the reconciliation of free-will and grace alone our adversaries ought to take warning and not imagine that they differ from us only in the explanation of this or that passage, but "when one part suffers, the whole body" (of doctrine) "will suffer." The Confession is clear on the point of excluding *every* human factor: "With his own powers man can contribute, do, work, cwork to his conversion neither the whole, nor the half, nor the least part, but is a slave of sin and body-servant of Satan, by whom he is actuated: John 8, 34. Eph. 2, 2. 2 Tim. 2, 26."

1) Only last fall the *Lutheran World* and the *Lutheran Observer* had a quarrel among themselves about Baptism, whether anything is given in Infant Baptism or not. The *Observer* contended for the last, because a child has no faith. The *World* being dissatisfied, because it holds Baptism to be a means of grace, said, that in Baptism "grace is infused," this grace, later on, being explained as the "germ of the new life." Faith is dodged persistently.

The author further makes for reconciliation by a description of conversion as “the long process of conversion extending through the entire life of a person, the daily laying-hold on grace.” Of daily repentance we are assured by Scripture, but we know also from the same source that conversion (*conversio transitiva*) is the act of the Holy Spirit by which He works faith in the sinner. Of this *act* we speak, and thereby man is *not συνεργός θεοῦ*. Of this act Chemnitz (*Loci* II, p. 185, ed. Leiseri), whom the author quotes, does not speak when he says: „*Post hunc autem motum voluntatis divinitus factum voluntas humana non habet se pure passive, sed mota et adjuta a Spiritu Sancto, non repugnat, sed assentitur et fit συνεργός Dei*“ (But after the movement divinely wrought [that is, after conversion] the human will does not hold itself purely passive, moreover, moved and aided by the Holy Spirit, it does not resist, but assents and becomes a coworker of God). Chemnitz speaks of the progress or the fruit of conversion as not an idle but a fruit-producing motion of the Holy Spirit, and even in this he is divinely actuated.¹⁾ But the author makes him say that in conversion proper (in the divine movement) man is a coworker with God, because in Baptism he has been infused with the new life. Conversion is not to be the divine movement to faith (the gift of faith), but something of man's work.

What causes the author to make such a muddle of it? He wants to prepare the ground for his reconciliation. He is going to make faith a personal exertion of free-will. He avoids the word faith, he calls it “the being-laid-hold-on

1) This is proven from Chemnitz' definition of conversion, where he says (Part III, 9, p. 222): „Non autem hic consistere debet disputatio de libero arbitrio. . . . Est igitur conversio mutatio divinitus a Spiritu Sancto per verbum in homine facta, qua novae spirituales virtutes . . . menti, voluntati ac cordi infunduntur“ (The question about free-will must not here [in conversion] be brought in. . . . Conversion, therefore, is the change wrought in man in a divine way by the Holy Spirit through the Word, by which new spiritual virtues . . . by the gift of the Holy Spirit are infused in the mind, will, and heart).

by grace," while the exertion of the free-will (he means faith) gains the name of "the full decision." These he can manage more easily. They must be identified, one taken for the other. These are his words: "Only when the being-laid-hold-on by grace and the full decision are identified do we get out the right way."¹ The proof passage is made of: "Thou hast been too powerful for me, and I have suffered myself to be won." The will of God and free-will are the same thing. If man decides for God, God has decided for him. You may call it either way: you are correct. This is the conception of the Lutheran theologians in Germany—we hope not of all.

Our adversaries will hardly admit that this forms the *basis* of their arguments. They make the *Form of Concord* say so. The author shows the way, when he says: "This is the (Dominus) Deus hominem non cogit." Thus it is easy to remove "the block and stone and pillar of salt" of the Confession with Chemnitz' words: "The will moved and assisted by the Holy Spirit does not receive an impression like a block, but it begins to will and to work. There is no such struggle in a block." Chemnitz might wonder what the German theologian is able to accomplish with his cautious words. While he is going to say that man is not in *every* regard like a block or stone, because he has an immortal soul capable of understanding and willing if moved and assisted by the Holy Spirit, the theologians of Germany make him say: Man is in *no* respect like a block or stone. But if he wanted to argue against the likening of unconverted man in this manner, he need not have looked up

1) The words read exactly thus: "Only when the being-laid-hold-on by grace and the full decision are identified do we get out *of* the right way." But as they give no sense in the connection of thought, we assume that they are incorrectly translated from the German: "Nur wenn das Ergriffensein von der Gnade und die voellige Entscheidung identificirt werden, kommen wir auf den rechten Weg hinaus." We beg the author's pardon if we cannot get at his true meaning. The fault, then, lies in the translation, which only is before us.

Chemnitz for proofs. He might have found *this* contradiction to the likening of unconverted man to a block and stone besides the "Deus hominem non cogit" as follows: "But if such a man (unconverted) despises the tools and means of the Holy Spirit and wills not to hear, . . . in this case it can be said that man is not a stone or block. For a stone or block does not *resist* him who moves him, does not understand and feel what is done with him as man resists the Lord God with his will *until he becomes converted*. . . . Yet toward his conversion . . . he is much worse than a stone or a block." But we think the Confession was too insoluble a stone to go into the compound.

Like our adversaries, their ally tries the Scripture proof for his identification theory, and it says what he wants the Scripture to say. But such are his words before he has introduced the Scriptures: "They characterize conversion, *as a work of grace, both as an act of God and as an act of man.*" We are almost afraid to tell plainly what these sacrilegious words mean. Don't they say that man performs an act of (divine) grace when he is converted? We recoiled at the first reading from such blasphemous language and blamed the translator, that he might have misunderstood the original, but the summary bore him out: "Man *can hear* (spiritually, Luke 11, 28) the Word when it addresses itself to him. Whether he then *longs* for it is decided according to the preceding course of his life and according to the greater or less morality existing in his natural disposition. . . . The *new affections created by grace*" (mark: this is before conversion) "*are intimately connected* with the moral nature of man and with the concrete stage of his development." We are not so uncharitable as to assume that our adversaries like this war-cry of their allies at their back. It is too plain an admission that they are in for the spoil. As soon as we are overridden and silenced, it won't matter. You must regard conversion as an act of grace by man. He has made himself King

of grace. If you yet want to call it the grace of God, you may be permitted, but rather be cautious and call it the grace of Man. It sounds natural, the other smacks of magic, according to the author. "This working-of-grace (of man) is irresistible in so far as it takes place unconditioned; but it does not act magically, and is *resistible in so far as the process is decided in the self-consciousness* one way or the other, in consequence of the position taken by the human personality." Man saves himself. He holds the decision for God, for eternity, for salvation in the hollow of his hand. He is his own savior. We are sure our special adversaries do not yet agree with that host of the enemies of God's grace. We take them at their profession. But we like to warn them of the dangerous company into which they have thrust themselves and tempted God.

What are the scriptural arguments of these outspoken enemies of God's grace? The same that our adversaries employ. "Conversion *even, as an act of man, is demanded:*" *Μετανοείτε, πιστεύετε, ἐπιστρέψατε.* And because man can resist with his own powers God's gracious will, they *must* also say that man can accept or convert himself by his own powers. That this is Erasmian logic has been sufficiently shown by Luther. The author also cites examples of resistance to grace of their own will: the rich young man, the scribe, Felix, to maintain thereby that every converted person in Scripture was not taken captive by the Lord, but delivered himself up out of his own grace. Nevertheless, if you are afraid to say so, then say: It was the grace of God. It means the same. This is the theme of the whole Bible: "Convert Thou me, and I shall be converted." According to the "identification theory" it is to say: If I have converted myself, Thou hast converted me. The Holy Spirit did not exactly know how to express Himself. But as He said so, His words can be easily mended. — But Peter (Matt. 16, 17), Paul (1 Tim. 1, 16), John, and the rest of those that were converted in the Scripture are not

among the company. They are too unmanageable. They are either acknowledging that God was too powerful for them, or are stupidly silent on the point of their own decision.

As you like it, dear friends. These are your arguments. Shall we come over? You will not expect it. We believe that some of you venerate in their hearts the flag of God's Truth and the Confession of the same, and will follow its lead.

The author also has a short battle-cry, succinct and clear. We must admit, it is not quite easy to understand what his many words meant: they are so very theologico-scientific. They remind us of what we read of Oliver Cromwell: His long speeches were not to be understood, but when he went against his enemies, his commands could not be misunderstood, nor misapplied, nor dodged, nor disobeyed. The author summarizes: “In so far as this reconciliation fails” (probably an incorrect translation of the German *fehlt* = is missing in the Confession), “we have to *supplement* the Confession; but in so far as it (the Confession) assumes an *equal* disinclination toward the Gospel” (as forbidding the desired reconciliation by identification) “and quotes only” (mark: because no others are available) “passages of Scripture which prove the corruption of the human heart, we have to *rectify* and *complete* it.” There the allies show the black flag which our special adversaries persistently conceal. The Confession is to be rejected, because it gives and allows no reconciliation. That must be supplied. But he has given not a single passage from Scripture that says, as he does: “Man, despite the Fall, *has* the *capacitas passiva, aptitudo naturalis* to salvation. Grace works in him an appropriating” (? appropriate) “*Verhalten* without taking away his natural freedom, in that the Word comes to him.... Whether he then longs for it, is decided according to the preceding course of his life and according to the greater or less morality existing in his natural dis-

position. . . . The *new affections created by grace* are *intimately connected* with the moral nature of man and with the concrete state of his development . . . they work a *new spiritual life*. This *process* is called *conversion*. At every point in this line the initial condition of being-laid-hold-on and of laying-hold-on is repeated. Grace alone" (according to identification: Man's act of grace) "holds the new *Ego* fast to the way that directs to God, but ever according to the measure in which man's *arbitrium liberatum* cooperates with it."

This summary of the position of God's enemies is exactly the same thing which we are resisting in the Ohio and Iowa synods. That is the essence of all they have said and written against us, charging us with secession from the Confessions and the Scripture and starting for "the gloomy error of Calvinism," while we know that we are just as far from it as from Arminianism, which hangs over them like the sword of Damocles. But here they have, in the confession of their allies, the cause of this great hubbub. *The reconciliation of the grace of God and human free-will is missing and must be SUPPLEMENTED*. Human reason, sundered from Scripture, is bound to make it.

Let us consider *this* reconciliation.

This reconciliation *fails*. It is not a reconciliation, but an identification. The human will is made divine, and the divine will human. It is a syllogism of the worst kind, tantamount to a tautology. It moves in a circle. The end is nothing more than the beginning. Its terms do not mean what they say. Man is without spiritual powers, and, Man has spiritual powers, may mean the same thing or may be suited to the occasion. The blind man has been *led*, therefore *he* found the way; or he *found* the way, therefore he *was* led. Our adversaries will excuse us if we find no deep theological and logical acumen in this reconciliation by identification. "There is an inner contradiction in it," as Pastor Brauer is quoted as saying by the author.

This reconciliation is *impossible*. The deep chasm between God's will and the sinner's will is eternally yawning. No amount of *reasoning* can bridge it. It is bridged only by God's almighty love in His Son offered in the Word, laid before the foundation of the world, and it is able to bring us over and keep us spiritually alive. It is a lie of the totally depraved imagination, inflamed by the Old Serpent, that when we are commanded to turn, repent, and believe we are able to decide for it. Rescue is brought and applied to us by these words of the Almighty. Are our adversaries and their allies totally unable to comprehend when Christians say: On this hinges Christianity altogether, that it marks the division line between faith in Christ and rejection of the Savior? It seems so: otherwise they could not throw it among "anthropological problems." But we say to them and all their host: Man has to believe God and take Him at His Word and let *His* way of redemption prevail, otherwise he is lost.

This reconciliation *has made the Lutheran church spiritually dead*, and will continue to do so, wherever it is upheld, all outward manifestations of life and influence notwithstanding. It has opened the doors to orthodoxism (holding the outward form of godliness, but denying the power thereof), pietism (making morals more than faith), unionism and rationalism, and all pietism, so-called, cannot help her up. We can only entreat our adversaries to turn, repent, and believe. It is God's gracious will that gives the power, which they have not. But they can reject.

We sum up by saying that the General Synod theologians of the *Quarterly* made a very poor selection in the means of succor for our adversaries against the "fanatic" Missourians. We cannot imagine that they wanted to indoctrinate their own helpless children, who are allowed to shift for themselves in all these questions.

FR. SCHWARZ.

WHAT IS LUTHERAN AND WHAT CALVINISTIC DOCTRINE IN THE ARTICLE OF ELECTION AND PREDESTINATION?

III. CAUSES OF ELECTION AND PREDESTINATION.

In the preceding chapters we have briefly presented the fundamental differences between our Lutheran and Calvin's doctrine of election. After showing that our doctrine differs totally from that of Calvin as to the extent and basis of election it remains to speak of some other points connected with this doctrine. Because Calvin's doctrine concerning the basis of election is false, he must necessarily teach false of the causes of election, of redemption, calling, conversion, perseverance, and the certainty of election. What does Calvin teach concerning the first of these points?

Regarding election an act of the absolute will of God in His independent sovereignty, Calvin, in fact, allows no cause of election whatever, unless the absolute will of God be called a cause. According to Calvin's doctrine God ordained men unto salvation simply and only because He wanted it so, moved thereto by nothing, in consideration of nothing, but exclusively regarding His own will. Christ and His merits are to Calvin not a cause of election, but by a decree of His absolute will God set apart some men for salvation, and their redemption through Christ is only a consequence of that decree. Calvin's doctrine is based on absolutism pure and simple, predestination for no cause or reason whatever, save only the absolute will of sovereignty.

On this doctrine Calvin insists most emphatically. He says: "When God is said to harden or show mercy to whom He pleases, men are taught by this declaration to seek no cause beside His will." (*Inst.*, vol. II, p. 163.) In place of more citations we will here only add how Calvin's followers understand his doctrine on this point. In an explanation of the *Westminster Shorter Catechism* (published by

the Presb. Board of Publ., p. 101) these questions occur: "Question 7: Is Christ the cause of election? Answer: No; the free love of God sent Christ to redeem the elect, and therefore He could not be the cause of electing love. Question 8: Did not Christ procure God's love to an elect world? Answer: No; the Father Himself loved them." This plain declaration renders election absolutely without a cause, and leaves Christ out in the cold.

On the other hand, our Evangelical Lutheran Church teaches that there are two causes of election: the grace of God and the merits of Christ. Moved by His grace and the merits of Christ, God elected men unto salvation from a perishing world, and not merely and only because He willed it so. *Epitome*, Art. XI, Negative 4, our Church condemns the doctrine, "that the mercy of God, and the most holy obedience of Christ; are not the only causes of the election of God, but that *in us* also there is a cause, on account of which God has elected us to eternal life." Here our Church distinctly confesses that there are these two causes of election: "the mercy of God, and the most holy obedience of Christ." Likewise, our Church solemnly warns against presenting election as if God had instituted "a military review, saying, This one must be saved, but that one must be lost." (N. M., 2. ed., p. 712.) Here our Church warns against considering election in the Calvinistic manner; for this is the very essence of Calvin's doctrine that God appointed one to life, another to death, only because He willed it so.

While our Church confesses that there are two causes of election, she, at the same time, says that there are *only* these two causes; yea, she pronounces it "false, horrible, and blasphemous" to teach, "that *in us* also there is a cause" of election. Now Calvin also teaches that there is no cause of election in man. Does then our Church in this point agree with the Calvinists? We answer emphatically, No. We might also answer yes, because our Church teaches,

just as decidedly as Calvin does, that there is no cause of election in man. If God would have looked to see whether He could find anything in any man which would render him eligible unto eternal life, He could not have chosen a single one, because Adam "begat a son in his own likeness," Gen. 5, 3. "The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one," Ps. 14, 2. 3.

Nevertheless, we do by no means agree with the Calvinists in this point, because we teach that there is no cause of election in man for an altogether different reason than Calvinists do. Why do Calvinists teach that there is no cause of election in man? Because, according to their doctrine, God had no regard of man at all, whether he be sinless or sinful, but exclusively regarded His own secret determination. But why do we Lutherans teach that there is no cause of election in man? Because, since the fall, man is altogether corrupt. There can be no cause of election in man, because there is nothing good in man. Neither could God foresee anything good in any man which could have commended him to God, because all the good which is in man is the operation of God. The elect are elect, not because they in any respect excelled others, or were better than others, not because they favorably distinguished themselves from others by some action of theirs, neither because God, as an independent Being, had set them apart by an absolute decree of His sovereign will; they are elect, because God has compassion on them for Christ's sake.

Stated in short sentences, the difference of doctrine in this point is this:

1. Calvin teaches that there is no cause of election save alone the absolute will of God.—We Lutherans teach that there are two causes of election: the grace of God and the merits of Christ.

2. Calvin teaches that Christ and His merits are not a cause of election, but only a means to carry out the absolute decree of God. — We teach that Christ and His merits are the ground, foundation, and cause of election.

3. Calvin teaches that there is no cause of election in man, because God exclusively regarded His own absolute will. — We teach that there is no cause of election in man, because man is altogether corrupt.

From the latter it is evident that Calvinists cannot accuse our Church of Synergism, as they do those who use the expression that God elected “in view of faith;” for if that expression is to convey any definite meaning, it implies that man can do something to obtain faith, or to cause God to work faith in him. That expression, at best, places faith outside of election, making it the outside rule according to which God had chosen, and leaving it in doubt whence faith comes, whether from God or from man. Because the expression “in view of faith” must either be so limited as to become a meaningless jingling of words, or implies that there is a cause of election in man, the Calvinists have reason to criticise it. But while eminent Lutheran theologians have made use of this expression, the quotation given above shows that it is neither contained in the Confessions of our Church, nor is it in harmony with them, and it cannot be counted a doctrine of the Lutheran Church. When our Lutheran Church teaches that faith belongs into election as an integral part of it, that all men are equally corrupt and equally redeemed, and that election is an act of God’s free grace in Christ Jesus not bound by anything good in man, Calvinists, judging by reason, may and do accuse us of inconsistency; they may and do pronounce our doctrine “puerile and absurd,” but they must confess that we are not Synergists.

We have before given ample proof that Calvin’s doctrine of an absolute election is not in the Scriptures, and we will only add the words of the Lamb: “I am Alpha and

Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last," Rev. 22, 13. Our salvation does not spring from an absolute decree of God. Jesus Christ is the beginning and the end of our salvation.

IV. REDEMPTION.

In former chapters we set forth the difference of doctrine in regard to election and predestination proper, and, we believe, have demonstrated to every careful and unprejudiced reader that our Lutheran doctrine has nothing whatever in common with Calvinism. The close relation, however, in which the doctrine of election stands to other articles of the Christian faith renders it necessary to speak of several additional points of doctrine. This is the more indispensably necessary, because Calvin makes predestination the foundation of the whole plan of salvation. He makes his doctrine of an absolute predestination the starting point from which he construes and, because being led not by the Scriptures, but by the principles of systematic thinking, spoils all the chief articles of the Christian faith.

The first article which Calvin's doctrine of predestination affects is redemption. Because Calvin teaches an absolute predestination and places it before redemption, he, as a natural consequence of that doctrine, restricts redemption to the elect only. Because God, according to Calvin's doctrine, had predestinated and created comparatively only a small number of men unto life and the multitude unto eternal misery, therefore Calvin *draws the inference* that God could not have sent His Son to redeem the reprobate; for this would not at all have been consistent. The sending of Christ, in Calvin's system, was only a means to carry out the decree of election unto life. Therefore the *Presbyterian Confession* (ch. 3, art. 6) says: "Neither are any other *redeemed by Christ*, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved, *but the elect only*." And the *Larger Catechism* (Qu. 59) says: "Who are made partakers of redemption through Christ?" Answer: "Redemp-

tion is certainly applied, and effectually communicated, to all those for whom Christ hath purchased it." That is plainly denying universal redemption, and saying that the blood of Jesus Christ was not shed for all men, but to purchase the elect only.

It is needless to repeat what our Lutheran Church teaches on this point.

The difference of doctrine is briefly this:

1. Calvin teaches that redemption is a consequence of election unto life.—We teach that election unto life is a consequence of redemption.

2. Calvin teaches that Christ died for the elect only.—We teach that Christ died for the elect, but not for the elect only.

3. Calvin teaches that Christ did not purchase salvation for those who will be lost.—We teach that Christ did purchase salvation for those who will be lost.

4. In Calvin's doctrine no one can know *a priori* whether he is redeemed, but each one is taught to *draw a conclusion* from his effectual calling to his redemption.—Our doctrine assures every one that he is redeemed, that salvation is prepared for him.

That Calvin's doctrine in this point is flatly against the Scriptures is evident from almost every page of the Bible, and he spends much labor to dodge those numberless passages treating of universal grace and redemption. These passages are so irritating to him that he sometimes apparently loses his temper. He, for instance, says: "If they obstinately insist on its being said that God is merciful to all, I will oppose to them, what is elsewhere asserted, that 'our God is in the heavens; He hath done whatsoever He hath pleased!'" This text, then, must be explained in a manner consistent with another, where God says: 'I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious.'" (*Inst.*, vol. II, p. 196.) Calvin takes those passages treating of election, and would have passages treating of universal grace ex-

plained *in a manner consistent with them*. Following the same principle, Synergists take those passages treating of universal grace and would have passages treating of election explained *in a manner consistent with them*. One is about as right as the other. The only difference is, Calvin goes to the right, Synergists to the left. But we hold that the Holy Spirit makes no blunders; neither is He, as John Calvin pretends in regard to John 17, 12, ever guilty of "inaccuracy of expression." When the Holy Ghost says "all," He means all, and when He says "chosen," He means a choice.

But of those passages which directly say that Christ redeemed those who will be lost, which, therefore, admit of no evasion, Calvin is silent as a grave. Thus Peter writes: "There shall be false teachers among you who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction," 2 Pet. 2, 1. Of those *same persons* of whom Calvin says that the Lord had not bought them, Peter says that the Lord has bought them.

V. CALLING IN ITS RELATION TO ELECTION.

Next to that of redemption the article of God's gracious calling is most miserably perverted by Calvin's doctrine of election. Because Calvin teaches an absolute predestination of some to life, some to death, and a redemption of the elect only, he, furthermore, consistently teaches that not all men are called alike: for it would not be consistent for God to call those unto salvation whom He had foreordained unto damnation, or for the Father to draw those to the Son for whom Christ had not been sent. If, indeed, the two first, Calvin's decree of reprobation and the non-redemption of the greater part of mankind, were true, it would certainly be inconsistent, yea, God would be acting against Himself, if He would call all men alike. What consistency would there be in first dooming a man to destruction and then

earnestly calling him to salvation? or in drawing those to Christ for whom Christ had not died? "Where, then," says Calvin, "will be the consistency of God's calling to Himself such as He knows will never come?" (*Inst.*, vol. II, p. 161.) For the sake of consistency Calvin teaches a two-fold call: the one external, through the Word, the other internal, through the Spirit; or, the one ineffectual, the other effectual. He says: "There are two kinds of calling. For there is a universal call, by which God, in the external preaching of the Word, invites all, indiscriminately, to come to Him, even those to whom He intends it as a savor of death, and an occasion of heavier condemnation. There is also a special call, with which He, for the most part, favors only believers, when, by the inward illumination of His Spirit, He causes the Word preached to sink into their hearts. Yet sometimes He also communicates it to those whom He only enlightens for a season, and afterwards forsakes on account of their ingratitude, and strikes with greater blindness." (*Inst.*, vol. II, p. 187.) What Calvin means by the latter clause of God's granting His special call also to some non-elect, we learn from the preceding paragraph, where he says of such as "fall away from Christ again, and sink into ruin": "I dispute not their having similar signs of calling with the elect; but I am far from admitting them to possess that certain assurance of election which I enjoin believers to seek from the Word of the Gospel." (p. 186.) On the assertion that God does not intend to call the non-elect unto Himself, but that it is His determinate decree that they shall not believe, Calvin expresses himself thus: "Those, therefore, whom He has created to a life of shame and a death of destruction, that they might be instruments of His wrath, and examples of His severity, He causes to reach their appointed end, sometimes depriving them of the opportunity of hearing the Word, sometimes, by the preaching of it, increasing their blindness and stupidity." (p. 191.) Again he says: "That the rep-

robate obey not the Word of God when made known to them, is justly imputed to the wickedness and depravity of their hearts, provided it be at the same time stated that they are abandoned to this depravity, because they have been raised up by a just but inscrutable judgment of God, to display His glory in their condemnation." (p. 193.)

Calvin's doctrine is plainly this: God calls only those truly, seriously, and earnestly unto faith and salvation who are predestinated to life; to them alone He gives true repentance and faith. The others God either deprives of His Word, or He calls them only externally, for a show, or He even cheats them by granting them emotions very similar to those of the effectual call, or He calls them by the Word to obdurate and harden their hearts. According to Calvin, God calls only the elect with the intention that they should come, the others may also be called, yet not with the intention that they should come, but only to render them more culpable, or, which is certainly the worst of all, to deceive them so that they mistake a stone for a fish. According to Calvin, the Word of the Gospel must indeed be preached to the multitude, but it is preached to the multitude only in order that out of that multitude the few elect ones may be called; for he says: "When the doctrine of salvation is offered to all for their effectual benefit, it is a corrupt prostitution of that which is declared to be reserved particularly for the children of the Church." (p. 160.)

At the risk, even, of becoming tedious to the reader we must yet mention a special point in Calvin's doctrine which is of far-reaching practical importance, and which shows the spirit and tendency of Calvinism. It is the relation into which Calvin places effectual calling to the Word. He frequently speaks as though he regarded the Word of the Gospel a means of grace, nevertheless he, in fact, separates the calling of the Spirit from the Word. His real sentiment is expressed in his treatise on the Sacraments. He there says: "The office of the Sacraments is precisely the same as that

of the Word of God.' (Inst., vol. II, p. 467.) Now to Calvin the Sacraments were nothing but empty shadows, signs, and emblems, of which he declares: "Nor do they impart any benefits, unless they are accompanied by the Holy Spirit to open our minds and hearts." To Calvin using the Sacraments amounts about to occupying one's self with a shadow which can be of benefit only when, aside from the Sacrament, the Spirit works in the heart appropriating that which is signified by the Sacrament. To Calvin the office of a sacrament is nothing more than only to emblemize, and the office of the Spirit is to effect that which is typified by the Sacrament, and the Spirit does not perform His work in and through the Sacrament, but apart and aside from it; for he says: "We assert the necessity of a separate consideration and contemplation of the internal grace of the Spirit, as it is distinguished from the external ministry." (p. 468.) Now the office of the Word is to Calvin the same. He does not regard the Word a vessel bringing the Spirit, not that which makes the heart to burn, but a mere proclamation which cannot and does not effect what it proclaims, wherefore he pronounces the calling through the Word ineffectual. Calvin's effectual calling is something aside and separate from the calling through the Word, something which the Spirit does immediately, like Revivalists expect the Spirit without means. (See also on this *Presb. Conf.*, chap. X.) As Calvin teaches an absolute predestination without causes, so, also, an absolute calling of the elect without means, and if absolute, then, of course, irresistible. What God decreed absolutely He carries out absolutely, that is Calvin's consistency, which, at the same time, opens a copious well-spring for fanaticism.

What we said in regard to redemption must here be repeated. According to Calvin's doctrine no hearer can know whether the Word which he hears is for him or not; whether it is intended for his salvation or for his greater damnation; he must wait to experience the working of the Spirit in his

heart, then to draw the inference that the Word is preached to him for his salvation, and even then he cannot be positively certain, because he might be deceived in his judgment.

In glaring contrast to Calvin's doctrine our Lutheran Church teaches that God has not two different calls, but as He has created all men unto eternal life and has redeemed all in Christ, so He also seriously, earnestly, and effectually through the Word of the Gospel calls all men unto Christ; for thus our Church says: "The divine call, which takes place through the Word, is not the cause that *many* are called, but *few* chosen; as if it were the declaration of God: 'Externally through the Word, to my kingdom, I call you all, indeed, unto whom I give my Word, but in my heart I do not intend it for all, but only for some few; for it is my will, that the greater part of those whom I call through the Word should not be enlightened and converted, but be and remain damned, although I have declared myself otherwise towards them through the Word in the call.' In this manner it would be taught that God, who is the eternal Truth, contradicts Himself; when, at the same time, God punishes this levity even in men, when a person declares a thing, and means and intends another in his heart." (N. M., 2. ed., p. 716.) Therefore our Church also teaches that no one should look to anything outside of the Word, but each one should be certain that it is for him, should embrace it, and expect all from, in, and through the Word, as our Confession continues in the passage quoted: "In this" (the Calvinistic) "way the useful (consolatory) foundation of our faith would also be rendered entirely uncertain, and be destroyed, in which we are daily reminded and admonished that *from the Word of God alone, through which He confers with us, and calls us, we should learn and determine what His will towards us is*, that whatever it promises us, we should firmly believe and not doubt." That in this doctrine an absolute calling and an irresistible grace has no room is too manifest to need special proof.

Hence the difference of doctrine may be summed up thus:

1. Calvin teaches that God has two calls. — We teach: As God is one His calling is one.

2. Calvin teaches that God does not earnestly and effectually call those who will be lost. — We teach that God does earnestly and effectually call those who will be lost.

3. Calvin teaches that God deprives some men of His Word, because He does not want them saved. — We teach that God deprives men of His Word only and alone because of their wickedness and ingratitude.

4. Calvin teaches that to some men God sends His Word to obdurate and harden them. — We teach that God sends His Word to enlighten and save all.

5. Calvin teaches that the non-conversion of men is owing to the decree of God denying them the grace of conversion. — We teach that God denies no man the grace of conversion, but the non-conversion of men is owing only and alone to their own wickedness.

6. Calvin separates the effectual calling of the Spirit from the calling through the Word, and teaches an absolute or immediate calling of the elect. — We teach that God calls men only through His Word.

7. Calvin teaches an irresistible calling of the elect. — We teach that the calling of God is not irresistible.

8. Calvin's doctrine leaves man in doubt, whether the Gospel is intended for him. — Our doctrine assures everyone that he is called unto Christ.

Because the calling of God is so important a point of doctrine we will briefly examine Calvin's attempt to prove his twofold call from Scripture and by argumentation. Here it becomes most manifest that Calvin's doctrine is false, heretical, and blasphemous; for by his attempt to prove his doctrine from the Scriptures he succeeds only in making it very evident that his doctrine is not in the Bible. To set this forth we will adduce several of those passages to which

Calvin chiefly appeals, and which to a superficial reader might appear to speak in his favor. Is. 53, 1 we read: "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" Arguing against our doctrine of a universal call Calvin says: "Though the voice of the Gospel addresses all men generally, yet the gift of faith is bestowed on few. Isaiah assigns the cause, that 'the arm of the Lord' is not 'revealed to all.' If he had said that the Gospel is wickedly and perversely despised, because many obstinately refuse to hear it, perhaps there would be some color for the notion of the universal call. The design of the prophet is not to extenuate the guilt of men, when he states that the source of blindness is God's not deigning to reveal His arm to them; he only suggests that their ears are in vain assailed with external doctrine, because faith is a peculiar gift." (*Inst.*, vol. II, p. 161.) The cause, says Calvin, why the arm of the Lord is not revealed to the great mass of mankind is not their wickedness and obstinacy, but because God, having decreed their blindness, does not deign to reveal His arm unto them, but calls them only with an external, ineffectual calling. But where does the text say this? Not with a single syllable does the passage indicate a twofold calling of men, only by an unwarranted inference does Calvin construe his own opinion into the text under the plea that faith is a peculiar gift of God. Faith is indeed a peculiar gift of God, but the question here is, Does this text teach a twofold calling of God? But not only does this passage not contain Calvin's doctrine, in the connection in which it stands it plainly teaches that which Calvin denies; namely, that the wickedness and obstinacy of men is the cause why the arm of the Lord is not revealed to them; for in the following verse the prophet says: "He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." In Jesus of Nazareth God did reveal His arm to the Jews,

but because He was meek and lowly they despised and rejected Him, although they could not deny that the power of God was with Him. The source of their blindness was not that God had not deigned to call them effectually, it was their obstinately refusing to believe in Christ. This is established by John 12, 37. 38: "Though He had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on Him, that the saying of Esaias, the prophet, might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?" The Lord wrought miracles before the Jews that they "might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God," John 20, 31, but blinded by the righteousness of the Law they could not see the glory of the Gospel, and therefore they despised and rejected it. The source of their blindness was the spirit of self-righteousness within them and not a decree of predestination, and, least of all, the miracles and preaching of Christ, through which God called them.

On Acts 13, 48 Calvin observes: "Jews and Gentiles in common heard the preaching of Paul and Barnabas. Though they were all instructed on that occasion with the same discourse, it is narrated that 'as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.' With what face, then, can we deny the freeness of calling, in which election reigns alone, even to the last?" (p. 181.) Calvin means to say, in that assembly the elect alone were called by the effectual calling of the Spirit and therefore they believed; the others were called only by the calling through the Word and therefore they did not believe. But the text does not say: As many as were effectually called, it says: "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed." Of an effectual and an ineffectual calling the text says nothing. The fact is, that whole assembly was effectually called, the same call came to them all, but the Jews from envy towards the Gentiles put the Word from them and instigated a persecution against Paul and Barnabas. They did the same that the members

of the High Council at Jerusalem had done before them, and to these Stephen said: "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost; as your fathers did, so do ye," Acts 7, 51. They were so effectually called that "they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth," and so determined were they in their opposition that "they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord." Stephen does not say: Ye do always resist the calling of God through the Word, he says: "Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost." It is plain, through Stephen's word they were called by the Holy Ghost, and this effectual call they resisted. The obvious meaning of Acts 13, 48 is this: That whole assembly was called with the same effectual calling through the Word; the elect among them received the Word, as God's Word, with joy; the others, not in consequence of any decree of God, neither because of a different calling, but only and alone by their own wickedness, particularly their malice against the Gentiles, denounced and blasphemed the Word, or if some of them did believe they believed for a time only and fell away again.

We must yet examine that passage which Calvin evidently regards the main citadel for his ineffectual call, Is. 6, 9. 10: "Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed." On these words Calvin remarks: "Observe, He directs His voice to them, but it is that they may become more deaf; He kindles a light, but it is that they may be made more blind; He publishes His doctrine, but it is that they may be more besotted; He applies a remedy, but it is that they may not be healed. John, citing this prophecy, declares that the Jews could not believe, because this curse of God was upon them." (p. 192.) As a matter of course

it is not our object to answer all questions which may be asked in regard to this passage, but only to examine whether Calvin's ineffectual calling is founded here. Neither is this in question, whether men do sometimes become more hardened when the Word is preached unto them;—this we Lutherans also teach; for the longer Moses dealt with Pharaoh the more hardened did Pharaoh become;—but the question is, whether God sends His Word with the intention and for the purpose that it should not work salvation in all men but greater damnation in the non-elect? To this question Calvin answers, Yes, and we Lutherans, No. Which answer does the text justify? Calvin brings this passage into connection with his absolute decrees of predestination, particularly the decree of damnation, and he here imagines to see its execution; but we say that this passage has nothing to do with the eternal election of God; for the election of God is an election of grace unto salvation. It only saves and never condemns anyone, neither does it in any way promote the damnation of men. Now this text treats of the damnation of men, so, then, it cannot of predestination; for there is no predestination unto death, as we have before proved. Nevertheless, the Lord's commission to Isaiah plainly is: "Go, make fat." How do the Scriptures explain this? To the Jews at Rome, Paul said: "Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, saying, Go unto this people and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand, and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive, for the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed," Acts 28, 26. 27. So the Word found the hearts of the people fat; it did not close their eyes, but St. Paul says of them: "Their eyes have they closed." In the first place, therefore, the commission to Isaiah was a prophecy, foretelling, so it would come to pass, Christ would come to save His people from their sins, and they would not receive His Word, but would harden their hearts, and Paul testifies the fulfillment

of this prophecy to them v. 28, saying: "Be it known therefore unto you that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and they will hear it."

Yet it is not to be disputed that the commission to Isaiah was not only a prophecy; for there is the direct command: "Go, make fat." On this Calvin insists by citing John 12, 39. 40: "Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their hearts, that they should not see," etc. Why could the Jews not believe? What does it mean that God hardened their hearts? The connection in which the words occur is this: When Jesus was admonishing the Jews to believe in Him a voice occurred from heaven, of which the Lord, v. 30, says: "This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes," namely that they should believe; v. 37 reads: "Though He had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on Him." Immediately after the words cited from Isaiah, John adds: "Nevertheless, among the chief rulers also many believed on Him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue." A little thereafter Christ says: "I came not to judge the world, but to save the world." How Calvin, in the face of all this, can assert that Christ, when preaching to those Jews, intended to call them only to damnation, we cannot see, unless he had his doctrine all fixed beforehand, and then hunted words of the Bible to give it an appearance of right. The reason why those Jews could not believe was very simply this: The Pharisees taught false doctrine and had seduced the people to that doctrine; neither were they willing to drop their false doctrine and to adopt the truth, and because they rejected and blasphemed the light, therefore God surrendered them to walk in darkness, and when God ceased to strike them (Is. 1, 5) they could do nothing but fall into greater blindness, until in madness of heart they exclaimed, "His blood be on us, and on our children," Matt. 27, 25. To

them happened what was threatened Deut. 28, 25: "The Lord shall smite thee with madness, and blindness, and astonishment of heart, and thou shalt grope at noonday, as the blind gropeth in darkness." "It has never yet been heard," says Luther, "that one who has brought up false doctrine was converted; for this sin is too great, because it blasphemes the Word of God and sins in the Holy Ghost; therefore God permits them to become hardened, that it comes to pass according to the saying Is. 6, 9." (W. ed. XX, p. 958.) That the false teachers of the Jews cast themselves into the judgment of hardening and seduced the people unto the same, should this prove that they had not been effectually called? If God ceases to spread forth His hands to those who obstinately refuse to hear, should He therefore not be in earnest about wanting all men saved? If a driver ceases to beat a balky horse, should this be a proof that he was not in earnest about wanting the horse to go?

Calvin also employs reasonable argumentation to prove his double calling. To the objection that God would act dishonestly by promising salvation to all while intending it only for a few he replies: "We know the promises to be effectual to us only when we receive them by faith; on the contrary, the annihilation of faith is at once an abolition of the promises. If this is their nature, we may perceive that there is no discordance between these two things—God's having appointed from eternity on whom He will bestow His favor and exercise His wrath, and His proclaiming salvation indiscriminately to all." (Vol. II, p. 197.) This is a mere sophism. The question is not what effect God's calling has in men, but whether it is effectual in itself, effectual on the part of God, intended by Him for the salvation of men. Calvin teaches that God does not intend the calling through the Word to be effectual; we teach that in itself God's calling is always effectual. But here Calvin asks: If the same effectual call comes to all, why does it not have the same effect in all? "The same sermon," he says,

“is addressed to a hundred persons; twenty receive it with the obedience of faith; the others despise, or ridicule, or reject, or condemn it. If it be replied that the difference proceeds from their wickedness and perverseness, this will afford no satisfaction, because the minds of others would have been influenced by the same wickedness, but for the correction of divine goodness.” (p. 191.) Here is the whole of it in a nutshell. Calvin explains the result of that sermon in this wise: The eighty are called only externally by the Word and therefore they cannot believe; the twenty are called with the effectual calling of the Spirit and therefore they must believe. This would make the result very plain. Synergists explain it in this wise: The eighty are so desperately wicked as to regard the Gospel foolishness; the twenty are not quite so desperately wicked; they refrain from counting the Gospel foolishness, and so enable God to have His work in them. This would also make the result very plain. Does the reader perhaps ask: How do you Lutherans explain this? *Answer:* We do not explain it at all; we let it alone. We only insist on these four things, but on these *we do insist*: 1. The same call comes to them all. 2. The same depravity is in them all. 3. The eighty despise the Gospel by their own wickedness. 4. The twenty are no better, of themselves they would do exactly the same as the eighty but for the work of divine grace in them. Here we stop, and let Arminians and Calvinists travel on flourishing the lantern of reason.

COUNTRY PARSON.

THREE OF THE PRINCIPAL PROOFS FOR THE DIVINE
AUTHORITY OF THE BIBLE.

III.

The prophecies contained in the Old and the New Testament, and the accurate fulfillment of these prophecies, are further conclusive evidence of the divine origin of the Bible.

Prophecy, no less than the doing of miracles, is a divine prerogative. Men cannot prophesy. The future hangs before us like a heavy veil which no human eye can penetrate, no human hand can lift or brush aside. God alone can "show what shall come hereafter." If the writers of the Bible prophesied, God must have spoken by them, their prophecies must be the Word of God, and their claim that all the rest of the Bible is God's Word must be true. Now, *did* the writers of the Bible prophesy? Let us "seek out of the book of the Lord and read."

A. Prophecies concerning Christ.

1. *Gen. 49, 10.*—How gloriously this prophecy has been fulfilled! Did not the kingdom of Judah exist as a well-appointed kingdom, having its own lawgivers or rulers—however they may have lacked independence—till Shiloh came, the Virgin-born, the Prince of Peace? And were not, and are not, the people gathered unto Him, learning from Him and governed by Him through His Word? And when Christ came and the Jews rejected Him, was not their kingdom overthrown once for all? History, both secular and ecclesiastic, shows this prophecy fulfilled.

2. *Deut. 18, 15.*—"This was spoken by Moses 1400 years before the day of Christ. Moses occupied a position among the prophets of Israel altogether unique. By him God established the first covenant with the people, gave them the Law, led them out of Egypt with a high hand, doing great and wondrous deeds, spoke unto him face to face. Now Moses says God will raise up unto them another

such prophet, who shall likewise deliver the people, who shall establish a covenant between God and the people, and to whom the Lord shall speak face to face. In saying that this prophet shall come after him, Moses indicates that his own prophetic work is insufficient, that a better covenant must be established between God and the people, and hence, that the coming prophet must be greater than he. You know who this true prophet is: Jesus, who has delivered us from the bondage of hell and established the covenant of grace." (Weseloh, *Das Buch des Herrn und seine Feinde*.)—That this prophecy has been fulfilled, we not only know from the New Testament; the quotations from Josephus and Julian¹⁾ corroborate it, while even the most pronounced rationalists admit that Jesus was a great and wonderful prophet.

3. *Ps. 22*.—How plainly are the sufferings of Christ foretold in this Psalm! What an awful depth of humiliation are we permitted to look into! What a vivid pen-picture of the suffering Savior! *V. 1*: Christ's plaintive cry upon the cross; *vv. 6—8*: The very things we read of Jesus as He hung upon the tree; *vv. 14—18*: Might be mistaken for the Gospel narrative.—And now, following this tremendous, this unparalleled suffering and this inconceivable humiliation, lo, the exaltation and the work which the exalted Savior is doing in the world through His Word, *vv. 22—31*.—Can this be David, the son of Jesse, that experiences such wondrous things? Must not this Psalm be a prophecy concerning a Greater One than David? Are not all these sayings literally fulfilled in the crucified and risen Christ?

4. *Is. 50, 6*.—Compare the Evangelists' account of the shameful treatment accorded Jesus in the council chamber of the Jews and in the judgment hall of Pontius Pilate.

5. *Ps. 16, 9b—11a*.—How grandly was this prophecy fulfilled in the death and resurrection of Christ!

1) *Theol. Quart.*, vol. IX, No. 1, p. 45.

6. *Is. 53*.—If unbelieving critics have deemed it necessary to say that this chapter *must* have been written *after* the suffering and death and resurrection of Jesus, *we* surely have no reason to doubt that *Jesus'* suffering and death and resurrection are here spoken of, and that we have in this chapter a most striking pre-presentation of these things.

B. Prophecies Describing the Time when Christ Should Come.

7. *Is. 53, 2a*.—In a day when the house of David would be fallen and very lightly esteemed. How well this accords with history!

8. *Hagg. 2, 7. 9*.—At the time of the second temple.

9. *Mal. 3, 1*.—At the time of the second temple and of John the Baptist.

10. *Jer. 3, 16. 17*.—At a time when the first covenant shall be no more.—That this is indeed a prophecy concerning the days of Christ, see v. 15 and compare the whole with *Jer. 23, 4—6*. These two prophecies evidently treat of the same subject, and in the latter one the Messiah is expressly mentioned. The whole was palpably fulfilled in the days of Jesus Christ.

C. Prophecies concerning the Jewish People.

11. *Deut. 28*.—Afflictions of the Jews because of their apostasy. *Vv. 28. 29a*. The attitude of the Jews toward their Messiah and their utter inability to understand their own accepted Bible are plain testimony and evidence that this prophecy has been fulfilled.—*V. 29b*. The numerous persecutions, the general hatred, and the well-nigh universal antipathy toward the Jews, show this prophecy fulfilled.—*Vv. 37. 48—50. 52—57*. What a plain prediction of the sufferings the Jews endured at the hands of the Romans!

12. *Matt. 24, 1. 2*.—Destruction of the temple foretold.—We all know it was not the custom of the Romans to destroy works of art such as the Jewish temple. Moreover, we know that Titus commanded his troops to spare the temple. But Christ not only predicted that the temple

would be destroyed, He foretold that it would forever so remain, Matt. 23, 38.¹⁾ Julian attempted to rebuild it, but to no avail.

13. *Luke 19, 43. 44.*—The history of the destruction of Jerusalem shows that this prophecy was literally fulfilled.

D. Prophecies concerning the World Monarchies.

14. *Dan. 2.*—Nebuchadnezzar has a dream which troubles his spirit. He sends for the astrologers, the magicians, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, and demands of them that they not only interpret his dream, but tell him what he has dreamt. But they cannot tell the dream, and they declare there is not a man on earth that can; none but the gods can show the king his dream. Nebuchadnezzar commands them all to be slain. And the executioners seek even Daniel to slay him. Daniel, however, asks the king to give him time that he may interpret the dream. Then he makes the matter known to his companions, that they may "desire mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret; that Daniel and his fellows should not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon." Hereupon the dream is revealed to Daniel in a vision by night, and not only the dream, but the interpretation as well, whereupon Daniel goes to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise men of Babylon, and desires to be brought in before the king. His request is granted, and Daniel tells the king his dream and the interpretation thereof. (The dream, vv. 31—36a; the interpretation, vv. 36b—45.)

"The great image is a type of the world power, of the four great world monarchies. The fact that each successive metal is inferior to the one above it indicates that the moral strength of the world monarchies shall steadily decline, each being inferior to its predecessor; that the world shall grow worse and worse as time passes by. The golden head is Nebuchadnezzar, or the Assyro-Babylonian king-

1) Observe the prominence given *ἀγίραι* in the Greek original.

dom; the silver breast, the Medo-Persian kingdom; the thighs of brass, the Greco-Macedonian kingdom; the legs and feet of iron, the 'imperium Romanum.' The last-named is the most-dreadful one of all and will trample all nations under its feet. That the feet are made of iron mixed with brittle clay and branch out into ten toes, points to the fact that the Roman empire will finally weaken and be divided and dissolve into a multitude of kingdoms.—Secular history shows the accomplishment of this vision. The stone that falls from heaven and becomes a great mountain is the kingdom which God shall set up out of heaven, the kingdom of Messiah, which shall spread over all the earth and overcome and outlast the kingdoms of this world.—Ecclesiastic history attests the truth of this revelation." (Stoeckhardt, *Biblische Geschichte des Alten Testaments*, p. 351 f.)

15. *Dan. 4, 1—24.*—Nebuchadnezzar had another significant dream. He saw in his dream a tree of great height. "The leaves thereof were fair and the fruit much." Its height reached unto heaven and its branches to the ends of the earth. The king saw, and, behold, a watcher and an holy one (an angel) came down from heaven and gave command that the tree should be hewn down. Nevertheless, the stump of its roots should be left in the earth.—That Nebuchadnezzar's "tree" was not a tree but a man, is seen from the latter part of the angel's communication, to-wit: this man shall be bound with a band of iron and brass, shall dwell with the beasts of the field and eat grass, his heart shall be changed from a man's heart, and a beast's heart given unto him. This matter has been decreed by the watchers and the holy ones (cf. v. 24: "the decree of the Most High") to the intent that the living may know the power of the Most High.—

All the wise men of Babylon could not interpret the dream. But Daniel declared the interpretation thereof. The great and beautiful tree he declared to be none other than Nebuchadnezzar himself, whose realm and dominion reached to the end of the then known world. And this Nebuchad-

nezzar was to be driven from men, bereft of his reason, abased to the level of a beast, and to dwell with the beasts of the field, till seven times should have passed over him; to the end that he might know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men. Finally, Daniel counseled the king to break off his sins and iniquities and prove his repentance true by righteousness and by showing mercy to the poor; then God would have patience with him and graciously spare him the grievous fate of which he had dreamed. In thus interpreting Nebuchadnezzar's dream, Daniel prophesied to the king, and in recording the interpretation, he prophesied before the face of all the world.

How true this prophecy was we see from vv. 28—37. At the set time the dream came to pass just as Daniel had foretold. At the end of twelve months Nebuchadnezzar walked in the palace of the kingdom of Babylonia, and, gazing on the magnificent city lying at his feet, he cried in unfeigned rapture: "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty?" But while the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, "O King Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken: The kingdom is departed from thee. And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field: they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will." "The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar: and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws." At the end of the days (the seven times) he lifted up his eyes unto heaven, and his understanding returned unto him, and he blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him that liveth forever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, before

whom all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing, who doeth according to His will both in heaven and on earth, and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him: What doest Thou? whose works are truth, and His ways judgment; and those that walk in pride He is able to abase. Thus was Nebuchadnezzar again received into grace, reinstated in his kingdom and his royal glory, and he attained even greater glory than he had known before.

In chapter 5 Daniel interprets for Belshazzar the handwriting on the wall and plainly foretells to the king how both he and his kingdom shall shortly perish. This prophecy was fulfilled that selfsame night. Ch. 7—12 Daniel again prophesies of the four great world monarchies, and likewise of Mohammed and Antichrist, and the fulfillment of this prophecy is so obvious to the student of history that—who but the willfully blind can fail to see it?

Or will anyone dare deny or indulge a doubt that these prophecies are prophecies indeed? Will anyone dare insinuate that they were written *post eventum*? As for Daniel, we have it on the authority of Josephus that his prophecies concerning Alexander the Great were shown to that monarch upon his arrival in Jerusalem with gratifying results. Alexander was thereby disposed to treat the Jews with kindness. The other prophecies which we have quoted from the Old Testament—Daniel's too, of course—are all contained in the Septuagint version. Now the Septuagint version was prepared in the third century B. C., and as all these prophecies, with the single exception of Deut. 28, treat of Christ, their prophetic character is above suspicion. Deut. 28 treats quite largely of the afflictions of the Jews at the hands of the *Romans*. And surely, none will dispute that these things occurred after the completion of the Septuagint. Consequently Deut. 28 is prophecy. Finally, touching the passages quoted in this connection from the New Testament, it will be remembered that they have been shown to be authentic under Thesis II. Consequently they, too, are prophecy.

Thus there can be no reasonable doubt that the writers of the Bible prophesied, that the Spirit of the Lord spake by them, that God has, also in this manner, stamped their word as truth and firmly established their claim that the entire Bible is the inspired Word of God.

IV.

The only proof for the divine origin of the Bible that begets true faith (fides divina) in the Scriptures is the witness which the Holy Spirit, through the Word of Scripture, witnesses in the heart.

The other two proofs are founded upon reason and cannot beget real, divine faith, that full persuasion or assurance, that spiritual confidence, which is the very essence of faith. All they can engender is human credence, a perfectly natural, purely human conviction. However, their value must not be underrated. We shall say a few things on that score at the end of this paper. Divine faith in the Scriptures, only the Scriptures themselves can beget, by means of the witness of the Holy Spirit, connected with, and operating through, the Scriptures.

What is the witness of the Holy Spirit? It is connected with the Scriptures and operates through the Scriptures, and that without the use of arguments founded upon reason, and without the concurrence of such arguments, if any such have been previously or simultaneously employed. (Cf. 1 Cor. 2, 4. 5.) When the contents of the Scriptures have, through reading, hearing, or in any other way, been received into the mind of a man, the latter's understanding is enlightened, and his will is affected, in such fashion that he perceives the Scriptures to be the Word of God and receives them as such. 2 Cor. 4, 6. 1 Thess. 2, 13.

How is the Holy Spirit's testimony in the heart obtained? Not immediately—for it is connected with the Scriptures and operates through the Scriptures. Nor is it immaterial *how* we read and hear. He *e. g.* who reads the

Scriptures to criticise them, to revile them, to offer willful and obstinate resistance to their workings, or who reads them without a desire to know the truth, merely to experiment on them, must not expect the testimony of the Holy Spirit. Howbeit, even on such people the Spirit's testimony has, no doubt, been bestowed. The line,

And fools who came to scoff remained to pray¹⁾—

is no mere flight of fancy. It is more than likely that some such thing was experienced by those officers whom the Pharisees and chief priests had sent to take Jesus, but who returned empty-handed and, on being asked, "Why have ye not brought Him?" replied, "Never man spake like this man." Unquestionably, the testimony of the Holy Spirit was experienced by Chr. Gerson and Franciscus Junius while they were reading the Scriptures without so much as a thought of seeking to know the truth. Gerson writes that "he had often wondered what manner of delusion that was that had such a powerful hold on so many myriads of men, to-wit, the Christian superstition, when one day it came to pass that a woman gave him the books of the New Testament in his mother tongue as a pledge. Availing himself of the opportunity he read them; not that he conceded any authority to the Christian religion or believed that there was any truth in them, but merely to find out what the errors of the Christians were. But while he read his heart was so deeply agitated that he began to acknowledge in a certain degree the divinity and majesty of these writings, and, seized with a desire to learn, he reread them and compared them with the books of the Old Testament, when, lo! there was kindled in his heart such a great light that he acknowledged without reserve (*plena fide*) the authority and divine origin of these books and professed the Christian faith." (Musaeus in Baier, vol. I, p. 137.)

Franciscus Junius, when a young man, was sent to Lyons, and, while there he was reading Tully's books *On*

1) *The Deserted Village.*

Laws, a certain person came to him and confirmed with many (arguments) the assertion of Epicurus: "God cares for nothing, neither for His own (affairs), nor for any one else's." This venom took hold of him so firmly, by reason of the person's authority and the subtlety of his arguments, that his heart was ensnared in this evil and hardened. But God rescued him marvelously from this frightful abyss of perdition, after he had for more than a year wallowed in (the mire of) most abominable pleasures. Called home by his father, who had learned that his son was imbued with this atheistic poison, and invited to read the New Testament, he gave up that pestilent opinion. But it is better to hear his own confession: "I opened a New Testament which Providence had thrust in my way. While I was occupied with something else, there presented itself to me at first glance that sublime chapter of John, the Evangelist and Apostle: 'In the beginning was the Word.' I read a part of this chapter and, while reading, I became so agitated that suddenly I perceived that divinity of sentiment and that majesty and authority of diction which leaves all streams of human eloquence far behind. *Horrebat corpus, stupebat animus, et totum illum diem sic afficiebar, ut, qui essem, mihi incertus viderer esse.*" (Melchior Adam in Baier, vol. I, p. 137.)

But whosoever *seeks* the testimony of the Holy Spirit, let him heed what the Savior says John 7, 17: "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God," commenting on which words Chr. Knoesius writes: "This working" (of the Scriptures) "is perceived by all that read or hear the Scriptures without obstinately resisting them, and, what is more, with a heart that longs for the truth, which just and not-to-be-disregarded terms on the part of the subject" (= the reader) "Christ defines John 7, 17." In this spirit let him read the Scriptures. First let him read the Law. The Law will show him clearly, pointedly, and powerfully; God the Holy Spirit will show

him that he is sinful through and through and therefore under the curse. Let him read this first and hear it both in the house of God and in private. Let him meditate therein and ponder these things in his heart. Let him use this Law as a mirror reflecting his own image, and carefully study every feature of this image. Let him suffer the Law to prick his heart, yea, to pierce it like a shower of arrows, and let him suffer the "arrows to stick fast" in him, that he may be imbued with a lively knowledge of his sins and of the just anger of God. And let him continue this use of the Law daily as long as he lives. In this manner he will perceive that he has no power to save himself or to do aught that will tend to his salvation. The Law will reveal to him his total depravity and helplessness.

But let him also read the Gospel, the message of the grace of God in Christ Jesus. Let him read this Gospel and ponder it. Let him apply it to his sinful, depraved, and wounded heart. He will find it a healing balm. For this Gospel preaches, shows, reveals, depicts, describes Christ Jesus. It will impart to him who reads it right a knowledge of Christ. An external knowledge at first. But with the Word of Christ the Holy Ghost will come and illumine his understanding and work faith, divine faith, in the Word and in Christ in the Word. He will cast a ray of the Light of the world into the sinner's heart, and thus will be kindled in him "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Thus he will receive faith. And if he continues in the Word, his light will grow brighter and brighter, his faith will wax stronger and stronger, and even the floods of great waters, of doubt and affliction, will not be able to overcome and extinguish it.

This proof for the divine authority of the Bible is not founded on reason but on experience. This is experimental religion in the noblest sense of the word. And this is proof indeed, not a process, nor a result, of reasoning, however subtile, but this is *proving*, trying, testing, and finding.

As one knows water by its taste, as one tells honey by its sweetness, as one recognizes light by its splendor, so one perceives the divinity of the Scriptures *by coming in contact with it* in the manner and spirit indicated above. When Nathanael, doubting that Jesus, whom Philip had found, was Messiah, asked, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Philip answered, "Come and see." And when Nathanael had seen and heard Jesus, he exclaimed, "Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God." In like manner he that comes to the Scriptures and sees and does not willfully close his eyes, and harden his heart, against the truth, will finally exclaim, "Thou art the Truth, Thou art the Word of God." The Holy Spirit will open his eyes and give him faith. He will so fully persuade him that the Bible is the Word of God and the Christ therein revealed his Savior, that he will triumphantly exclaim: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? . . . Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord." Yea, in the deepest sorrow he will say with Job: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another." And with Paul: "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day." And with David: "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want," etc. (See the entire Psalm.) His faith will be "the victory that overcometh the world." He will suffer neither the world nor the devil to rob him of this faith, though they torture

him with horrifying cruelty, as they did the Christian martyrs in the days of yore. Yea, should God Himself become cruel to him and with His strong hand oppose Himself to him,¹⁾ yet will he have power with God Himself and prevail.²⁾

This experimental knowledge of the divinity of the Bible must not be confounded, however, with the emotional bliss of Methodism. It doubtless manifests itself more often in silent sorrow than it does in loud and ostentatious joy, and probably finds its truest expression in the Augustinian plaint which the poet has paraphrased as follows:

Alas! that I so late have known Thee,
Who art the Fairest and the Best:
Nor sooner for my Lord could own Thee,
Our highest God, our only Rest!
Now bitter shame and grief I prove
O'er this my tardy love.

And the fear of losing Jesus and His Word, and the sad and sorrowful demeanor resulting from and accompanying such fear, reveal the firmness of the believer's faith in the divine origin of the Bible more frequently than the rejoicing of his spirit and the corresponding joyful expression of his countenance.

This testimony of the Holy Spirit and this assurance of the divinity of the Scriptures is retained, of course, by use of the same means by which it is first received, by means of the Word of God, by continuing in Christ's Word. Willful and wanton persistence in a life of disobedience will silence the Spirit's voice, and forfeit the sinner's assurance, however speciously he may outwardly continue to use the Word; since he who willfully sins on being received into grace grieves God's Holy Spirit and banishes Him from his heart. —

Now, how shall these proofs for the divine authority of the Bible be utilized? When shall we employ proofs founded on reason and when appeal to the testimony of the Holy Spirit in the heart? Here one must consider the person with whom one has to do. If the person be an unbeliever

1) Job 30, 21.

2) Gen. 32, 28; cf. Mark 7, 24—30.

and worship the goddess of reason, prove to him that it is *more reasonable* to accept the divinity of the Bible than it is to reject it. In this manner such persons may at least be induced to hear and read the Scriptures, and through the gracious operation of the Holy Spirit they may then be led to believe. If he whom you have to deal with be a Christian who chances to be vexed by the voice of reason because, *e. g.*, he has discovered apparent contradictions in the Bible, demonstrate to him that these "contradictions" are only apparent, and can never be shown to be real contradictions, and thus bridle his carnal reason, the source of his doubts and vexations, by rational arguments in favor of the divinity of the Scriptures. Then let an appeal be made to the testimony of the Spirit which he has, himself, experienced in his heart, and let him be asked which of these two he holds in higher regard: the Holy Spirit's witness or his own miserable, blind understanding. If he be grieved at the thought that his faith in the Scriptures is dwindling, let him be asked why that thought gives him grief, and let him be asked what better proof he desires of what to you is plain, *viz.*, that at heart he clings very firmly to the belief that the Scriptures are divine. But, however the case may be, one should never fail to direct one's patient to the Scriptures themselves, and tell him to read and hear what they say, without prejudice and stiff-necked resistance to their gracious treatment. Also tell him to pray for the gift of faith in the Bible, as David does in the Psalm: "Stablish Thy Word unto Thy servant," Ps. 119, 38. Above all things, one should not forget to testify, and impress upon the mind that nothing short of repentance and faith will make and keep a man a Christian and enable and cause him to perceive that the Scriptures are divine truth and to receive them as such in divine faith. For "*it is the Spirit,*" and the Spirit alone, "*that beareth witness.*" "*And he that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself,*" 1 John 5, 6b. 10a.

J. A. RIMBACH.

THE PASTOR IN HIS WORK.

IV. Administration of the Lord's Supper.

(Continued.)

With regard to those who are to be admitted to the Lord's Supper, Article XXV of the *Augsburg Confession* says: "Confession is not abolished by our ministers. For the custom is retained among us not to administer the Sacrament unto those who have not been previously examined and absolved."

This declaration of the *Augustana* reflects strongly on an abuse which still obtains in some parts of our American Lutheran church. We refer to the custom of extending an invitation to members of other churches, who are in good standing in their own church, to partake of the Communion at a Lutheran altar. Whether this invitation is extended before or after the congregation has communed makes no material difference. In either case it is inviting *those of another faith* to join Lutherans in celebrating the Lord's testament.

The pastor who extends such an invitation commits a grievous sin in various ways. He acts as though he were master over the Lord's table and had a right to invite whomsoever he pleased. He opens an opportunity for unworthy persons to come forward and to eat and drink damnation to themselves. He offers the Sacrament to those who count it nothing but an emblematic meal, and who can therefore not discern the Lord's body. He is a steward who throws open the King's treasure to each and everybody.

On this custom of inviting those to the Communion who have not been to confession Dr. C. F. W. Walther uses the following vigorous language: "Such preachers act against the command of God: 'Neither be partaker of other men's sins,' 1 Tim. 5, 22. Whosoever can prevent a sin and does not only not do it, but rather himself promotes it, is partaker of that sin. Now those preachers often could

prevent this dreadful sin of an unworthy partaking of the Lord's Supper. But prompted by the fear of man or the desire to please men they do not only not prevent this sin, but promote it by their frivolous invitations. O how dreadful will be their responsibility! How will they be terrified when God will lay to their charge all the guiltiness in Christ's body and blood with which those impenitent, unbelieving, and erring persons have burdened themselves whom they admitted without examination! Surely, if unworthy communicants are condemned, those who enticed them must suffer tenfold condemnation." (*Lutheraner*, vol. IV, p. 162.) This is strong language, but no one can deny that it is a just condemnation of a custom by which the holy testament of our Lord is exposed to profanation.

Such an invitation is moreover an affront to the pastor's own congregation. Of his own members he requires that they should previously announce their intention to commune and should attend preparatory worship, and then he invites strangers to partake of the communion without previous notice and without having been to confessional services. This certainly amounts to saying that Presbyterians, Methodists, etc., need no preparation, but Lutherans do. This invitation disgraces Lutherans, and it is surprising that any Lutheran congregation would tolerate it, the more so because it is so manifest a violation of the *Augsburg Confession*. The pastor who has subscribed this confession must violate his pledge by extending such an invitation, unless his subscription was of such a character as to allow him liberty to disregard the confession of his own church whenever he chooses. It is pleasing to note that this abuse is being discarded at some places where it was in vogue for generations. No Lutheran congregation should countenance it.

The persons who are not to be admitted to the Lord's Supper may be classified in the following manner:

1. Those who are not yet baptized. Baptism is "the washing of regeneration," Tit. 3, 5, in which souls are "born

of water and of the Spirit," John 3, 5. Baptism being the door into the Church of Christ, its very nature requires that it must precede the participation in the Lord's testament. The Lord instituted His testament for His disciples and not for strangers and foreigners. Concerning the Passover it was commanded: "No uncircumcised person shall eat thereof," Ex. 12, 48. Even so in the New Testament no unbaptized person shall eat of this bread and drink of this cup.

2. Infants and children, because they cannot comply with the command of the apostle: "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat," 1 Cor. 11, 28. When in the Greek church the communion is given to infants, it is done in disregard of this command of the Lord.

3. The same applies to adults who have not the use of their mind. When a believer becomes deranged, he is not on that account deprived of grace. The Holy Ghost will certainly not forsake him, and Christ, the Good Shepherd, will not suffer such an unfortunate soul to be lost. But deranged persons are debarred from the Sacrament, because they cannot examine themselves. Lunacy or periodic insanity and idiocy are therefore not absolute impediments. Neither should the Sacrament be given to patients who are unconscious or delirious, or no more able to receive the elements. The pastor should also see that a patient desiring the Lord's Supper be not benumbed by opiates just at that time. He will therefore do well to mention this beforehand to the nurses or the doctor who is in attendance.

4. Ignorant persons who have been baptized, but have never been instructed in the Christian doctrine and do not know what the Sacrament is and what it is for. Under popery all, even the most ignorant, were admitted, and in some Protestant denominations there is a similar practice. But a Lutheran pastor who has subscribed the *Augustana* cannot admit those who would receive the Sacrament in ignorance, not knowing the use and benefit thereof. In a sermon on the Lord's Supper Dr. Luther says: "Hence-

forth this shall be the order that no one shall be admitted to the Sacrament unless he has first been examined and has evinced his sentiment, whether he knows what the Sacrament is, and for what purpose he wishes to commune. Long enough have we had forbearance and tolerated the old abuse." (W. XI, 834.) The greater the ignorance is which prevails in our country with regard to the Sacrament, the more must a pastor be intent to certify himself that those to whom he administers it are at least so far informed as to be able to examine themselves and to commune with benefit.

The reason why the ignorant and those who have not the use of their reason are to be excluded from the Lord's Supper becomes very patent to the mind when we compare the two Sacraments of the New Testament with each other as to their nature and object. The chief thing in Baptism is God's establishing His covenant of grace with the person who is baptized. It is very clear that the establishing of such a covenant does not necessarily require the exercise of intelligence on the part of the person with whom the covenant is made. God can establish a covenant with the irrational and inanimate creatures, and He has done so. Unto Noah God said: "Behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you; and with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth," Gen. 9, 8. 9. If God can establish a covenant with beasts and with birds, He can certainly do so with an infant. When Baptists and others contend that children should not be baptized, because they have not the exercise of their reason, and are therefore not capable of making a covenant, this proceeds from ignorance of the nature of Baptism; for there is nothing to prevent God from making a covenant even with generations yet unborn. But the Lord's Supper is a sacrament of a very different character. It is intended for the strengthening of faith and the promotion of godliness in those who are already become Christians. This requires the use of intelligence

on the part of the recipient, and in order to exercise intelligence it must first be there. Hence it militates against the very nature of this Sacrament to offer it to the ignorant who do not know what it is and what it is for.

The beneficial use of the Sacrament is, of course, not dependent on the *degree* of knowledge. A boy who has learned Luther's Catechism, understands it, and heartily believes it may derive greater benefit from communing than a learned Doctor of Divinity. But the knowledge which the words of institution and 1 Cor. 11 require must be there. Hence the necessity of instructing the ignorant, and this instruction should be given with the utmost care. There are pastors who count themselves most successful workers if they win many for the Lutheran fold from the sects, but this becomes a fatal mistake if those persons are not fully persuaded of the truth of Luther's doctrine. Simply to talk people into the notion of coming over to the Lutheran fold is frequently loss and not gain, because it is bringing in a strange and discordant element which may soon become troublesome or even dangerous to the church. True and genuine success is in making people Lutherans in heart, mind, and sentiment.

5. Manifest and impenitent sinners must always be refused. Because the Lord's Supper is a pledge and seal of forgiveness, it can be of benefit to those only who repent of sin and desire to be rid of it, and the impenitent who expect to go on in sin would only eat and drink damnation to themselves. The pastor who admits such manifest and impenitent sinners helps them on in the way of destruction and sins against the word of the Lord: "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine," Matt. 7, 6.

However, it is well to be remembered that the Catechism combines these two things: "manifest and *impenitent*." A manifest sinner is one who lives in such sins which manifestly make a man an unchristian, and whose

sins are known. When such a manifest sinner repents and asks forgiveness at the proper place and in the proper manner, he is of course to be admitted, and if some members of the congregation suggest that one who has been guilty of disgraceful acts or has served a term in jail be not allowed to approach the altar with others, the pastor must not consent. Such a discrimination might have place if the essence of Christianity consisted in a code of morality, but the essence of our religion is comprised in the saying, "that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," 1 Tim. 1, 15, and in the days of His flesh He received many who had been manifest transgressors.

Because *manifest* and impenitent sinners are to be excluded, it is evident that the pastor dare not act according to his moral conviction, or even according to his personal and private knowledge. He may be convinced in his own mind, or may know positively, that an applicant for communion is secretly living in sin and is not penitent, yet he cannot refuse the Sacrament. He may warn and expostulate to persuade such a person to stay away from the Lord's table, but he has no right to reveal what God allows to remain secret, and he must act according to Prov. 11, 13: "A tale-bearer revealeth secrets, but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter."

6. Persons who follow dishonorable and sinful occupations must first abandon their former way. Such, for instance, are keepers of lotteries, gambling dens, disreputable houses *et id omne genus*. Into this category belong fortune-tellers, spiritualists, and those practicing the black arts, concerning which we read Acts 19, 19: "Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men." People who use incantations and superstitious arts for the stilling of pain, discovering of secrets, etc., often do not know that these are heathenish practices, and they must be dealt with as persons walking in unknown sins and needing instruction.

7. Persons who are entangled in a quarrel must be exhorted to comply with Matt. 5, 23. 24. Very frequently such persons claim that they are the party which has been sinned against and therefore this word of the Lord would not apply to them, but even when this is a fact they are, nevertheless, under obligation to *seek* reconciliation before communing. The innocent party becomes guilty if no attempt at reconciliation is made. The party that has done all in its power to bring about a reconciliation and has failed must be admitted to the Sacrament lest a penitent Christian be permanently deprived of the communion by the malice of an enemy. A suit at court, if not carried on from spite and enmity, is *per se* not an impediment, but as a rule it is more advisable for Christians to refrain from communing while a suit is pending. In cases where restitution is necessary this should, if possible, be made before communing.

8. Excommunicated persons must first be received again into the communion of the Church, and their repentance must be made known to the congregation before they are publicly admitted to the Lord's Supper. When an excommunicated person makes confession on his deathbed and requests the Sacrament, his request may be granted before his repentance is made known to the congregation generally, but this is to be counted an exception to the rule.

9. With regard to lodge members the rule should obtain that they must first withdraw from the lodge. There are exceptional cases when a man can be admitted before he has *formally* announced his withdrawal to the lodge, but the rule must be: First withdraw, then commune.

10. Those who do not believe the Lutheran doctrine, according to the rule: "Lutheran altars for Lutherans only." Those who do not believe the real presence of Christ's body and blood cannot discern it, and though they may be truly converted Christians, yet their error must debar them from a Lutheran altar. Those who eat of one bread and drink of one cup are to be one in faith, as in

love. When dying persons who belong to another denomination request the communion by a Lutheran pastor, it is sufficient that they confess their faith in the words of institution, *i. e.*, in the Lutheran doctrine of the Lord's Supper. Time and circumstances may not permit them formally and publicly to withdraw from their former connection, and the Sacrament should not be denied them on that account.

When a person whom the pastor refuses to admit insists that he will come to the communion and the pastor must give it to him, the case must be referred to the congregation, and the congregation, next to the Word of God, being the highest authority in the Church, the pastor must then be governed by its decision, unless the case is of such a character that the pastor is in duty bound rather to resign his office than to consent to the decision of the congregation. On the one hand, it is to be remembered that the pastor is the minister, the servant of the congregation, and not its lord and ruler; on the other hand, that he is the steward of Christ and can and dare do nothing in violation of his Master's Word and command. In all cases therefore in which the decision of the congregation is not in direct and manifest violation of Christ's Word and command the pastor should yield, but if, for instance, the congregation would resolve that the pastor must admit any and everyone who applies this would be in direct conflict with 1 Cor. 11, and the pastor must rather resign than acquiesce, because he must obey Christ rather than men.'

When a person has repeatedly fallen into the same sin and has repeatedly broken his promise of bettering his life, the pastor may, or, as the circumstances may be, should advise such a person to refrain from communing for a time lest offense be given to the Church or to those in the congregation who are inclined to regard the repentance of that person spurious and deceptive; for the apostle commands: "Give none offense, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God: even as I please all men

in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many," 1 Cor. 10, 32. 33. But while such persons may be advised to refrain from communing until they have shown their repentance by their conduct, absolution should in no way be denied them, neither should it be postponed. Absolution should be granted at once. When Peter asked, "Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?" Jesus said unto him, "I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven," Matt. 18, 21. 22. To postpone forgiving those who repent and ask forgiveness is not in keeping with the spirit of the Gospel, unless there be very urgent reasons to suspect their sincerity.

In places and communities where the practice of the confessional Lutheran church is not generally known it may easily occur that strangers come forward who have not announced themselves. In such cases we regard the following the best mode of procedure: If the pastor is uncertain whether or not he can give the Sacrament to a person presenting himself, he should put a question or two in an undertone and then act according to the answer received. If he is positively certain that he must refuse the Sacrament, he may either simply pass that person by in the distribution, or request him or her to withdraw. Which of the two is the more advisable depends on the circumstances. The better way is if the proper officers of the church are instructed to restrain persons not entitled to the communion from approaching the altar.

The administration in all its parts should be performed by the pastor with the utmost solemnity. The celebration of the Lord's testament is a solemn act, and the pastor's behavior should show that he realizes this fully. There is nothing more offensive in the church than administering this Sacrament in a perfunctory, careless, and easy-going manner. If churchly decorum is to be observed by the pastor in all things, then certainly in the administration of this sacred Supper.

The consecration is performed by reciting the Lord's Prayer and the words of institution over the elements, whereby they are set apart for the sacramental use, and the words of distribution should always express the fact of the real presence of Christ's body and blood in an unequivocal manner. This is attained by using the word *true*: "This is the true body; this is the true blood." This word must not be used in the consecration, but in every Lutheran church it ought to be used in the distribution, so that every man may know what those who commune at this altar believe of this Sacrament.

As to forms and ceremonies, the pastor should accommodate himself to the usages of the congregation by which he is called. A pastor should, of course, aim to introduce or to preserve approved Lutheran forms and ceremonies, but so to insist on the changing of usages as to cause disturbances and commotions in the church would not be in harmony with Article VII of the *Augsburg Confession*.

F. KUEGELE.

MISCELLANY.

On Agnosticism, which denies the natural knowledge of God, W. H. Hodge writes in *Intuitive Perception*:¹⁾ "The affirmation of Agnosticism is that God is unknown and unknowable. We do not know that He is, and if He be, we can have no knowledge of Him. Both these propositions are untrue. We know assuredly that beyond the finite world

1) *Intuitive Perception Presented by a New Philosophy of Natural Realism in Accord with Universally Accepted Truths* by William Henry Hodge. The Wickersham Press, Lancaster, Pa. Price, \$1.50. — The purpose of this book is to establish Realism over against Materialism and Idealism. The author endeavors to prove that by intuitive perception we immediately cognize the realities of the spiritual and the material world. This laudable attempt, however, is marred by numerous concessions to modern anti-biblical scientific theories.

there is the 'not-finite' from which it comes as from an efficient cause. This is the testimony of Consciousness universally recognized. Thus knowing that there is a 'First Cause,' we know that it must be of such a nature, or have such a character, or such attributes as to be competent to bring into being the material Cosmos, all forms of organic life, and intelligent free agents such as we are. All this in some true sense and degree must be in it. It is true that we can have no knowledge of God *as* infinite, *as* absolute, but it is also true that we may know Him, as He has made Himself known in His works.—Our knowledge of things is in a large measure a knowledge of that which they do, or have the power of doing. Because of his work, we say of one man that he is a carpenter; we say of another because of his work, that he is an author; of another, that he is a poet; of another, because of his buildings of marvelous architecture, that he is an architect. We may know nothing more about these, but we know thus much concerning them. We know their works, and that these men are such, that they can produce them. I may show you a small piece of something. You do not know what it is. I place it at a great distance. In a few minutes, by reason of a blow, or a spark of fire, it explodes with destructive force and deafening detonation. You do not know what it is made of, nor how it is manufactured; you can have no conception of how, or why it exerts that terrific force. But you have some knowledge of its nature and character; you name it 'dynamite,' and handle and use it accordingly. Your knowledge is true, and practical. I place before you a small box concerning which you are altogether ignorant. I touch it; you hear coming from it music, the tune of which is familiar to you; six or seven tunes are heard, one after another. You may have no idea of the mechanism which produces the music, but you know what it can do; you call it a 'music-box,' and at your pleasure you touch it, and it sends forth its sweet sounds. Your knowledge, though so limited,

is true and practical. I may place you blindfolded in a room in which there is a man. He calls you by name; he speaks to you in English, in French, Italian, Spanish, German, Greek, Latin, Hebrew, you know that he is a linguist. He narrates ancient and modern history to you, you say that he is an historian, with a wonderful memory. He repeats long passages, gathered from the great authors of English, French, and German literature. He speaks with fluency of the discoveries made in Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Chaldaea. He discourses of statesmanship, science, philosophy; of morality and religion; and in thus speaking the tones and intonations of his voice are those of earnestness, conviction, deep emotion. All this is what he can do, and what he does. In knowing this you know him. The above is the definition, the description, the character which you give of the man. The woman of Samaria expressed her knowledge of Christ by saying, 'Come, see a man that told me all that ever I did.' So in the supposed instance your knowledge of the man is of that which you heard him speak. You are totally ignorant of all else about him. You have no conception of how the human voice frames itself and expresses the thoughts and emotions of the soul;—of how the brain acts in thought, memory, and speech;—of how different forms of language, history, literature, antiquities, statesmanship, science, philosophy, religion are grouped, arranged, and fashioned into forms of speech by the mind;—you do not know what the invisible, intangible soul is, nor how it is in vital union with the body;—all is veiled in impenetrable mystery, but you know the man because you know what he can do; you know his powers, the attributes with which he is clothed; your knowledge of him is true, definite, practical. *These are true illustrations of our knowledge of God.* He is as invisible and intangible as the human soul, deeper mystery envelops Him than rests upon it. But we know Him in His works, just as we know the soul and things material."

F. B.